

Dear Judge Haikala:

My name is Allison Kowalczyk and we live in the Jones Valley Estate Area of Huntsville, Alabama. My husband and I currently have four children in the Huntsville City Schools. [REDACTED] is 15 a sophomore at Grissom High School, [REDACTED] is 12 and a 7th grader at Whitesburg Middle, [REDACTED] is 9 and is in 4th grade at Jones Valley Elementary along with her brother [REDACTED] age 5 in Kindergarten.

Our family will be greatly impacted by the current proposed consent order. We live in a neighborhood that will be demanding 2 of my children leave the schools that they have been attending and moving to new schools outside of our current area. I am aware that letters have been sent to you regarding keeping the current students in 7th-11th grade in their current school and allowing them to finish through high school. This is so important for my children.

[REDACTED] is dyslexic and has difficulty adjusting to change. He chose to stay in a difficult science class this year instead of moving to an easier teacher just to avoid making a change. Elizabeth has already had to adjust to new friends when she was one of a handful of kids that moved to Whitesburg middle from her elementary school, she does not want to do this again.

Although it may seem trivial we are a swimming family. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both swam for Grissom High School on the swim and dive team this year. [REDACTED] was on the varsity team that travelled to Aruban to compete at the High School State Championship. My kids are good swimmers but they are not top 8 finishers, however they contribute to the strength of the Grissom swim and dive team. If they are forced to move to Huntsville High School their ability to compete at the State level will be greatly diminished as the Huntsville team has a larger group of elite swimmers. My kids may never get to swim at a State Meet again. Also there is a rule that is participated in a sport at one high school and then move to a different school you are not allowed to compete for the new school for one year.

Allowing my kids to stay in the Grissom pattern would greatly affect their enjoyment of the High School experience.

However, just allowing 7th-11th graders to be grandfathered does not solve all of my problems. I will still have two children at Jones Valley who would then be required to attend Huntsville Middle and High schools – essentially dividing my family in two. As parents it becomes increasingly difficult to juggle multiple schools but now I would be juggling multiple systems.

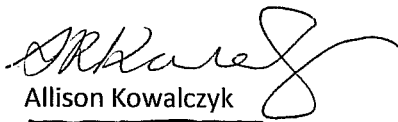
My proposal would be to allow the families in the neighborhoods that are effected by rezoning the opportunity to choose which feeder school zone they wish to continue in. A one off change to move our kids into the correct schools so as a family they can finish their education. I would in a heartbeat move my younger children to Whitesburg elementary to allow them to attend the same middle and high schools as their siblings.

As a parent I volunteer at both the elementary and high school levels. At Grissom High School I am the president of the Booster club for the Swim and Dive Team. We are not a big team

(approximately 40 students) and our parent volunteer pool is even smaller. The team will suffer and will be without leadership if we are forced to move schools. I also would not be motivated to continue volunteering when my children are split between multiple schools.

In no way am I opposed to the consent order. Efforts to increase diversity in our schools are commendable. My family and I are just asking to continue to attend the schools that we chose when we purchased our house 4 years ago.

Thank you for your consideration


Allison Kowalczyk
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]